

New Mexico's Third Congressional District is known for its beautiful landscapes and natural resources. It is important that we work together to protect the natural, cultural and historical resources which are integral to the identity of all New Mexican's. Land and water are a critical part of the district, and Ben will work to protect the culture and traditions associated with land and water while ensuring that New Mexico's beauty is also protected. From our national forests and wilderness areas to our acequias and land grants, there are common values we all share.

Early in the 111th Congress, Ben had an historic opportunity to support two very important pieces of legislation designed to protect America's beautiful landscapes and the natural resources associated with them. The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act was signed into law by President Obama and will benefit our entire nation. Several elements in this Act are designed to preserve historical sites, protect forests lands and wildlife habitat, and assess the many uses of land and natural resources across the nation.

Ben supported the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement (FLAME) Act that included an amendment he offered that aims to reduce wildfire risks associated with invasive species. The FLAME Act establishes a permanent fund for fighting catastrophic wildland fires and establishes a cohesive wildland fire management strategy.

In addition, Ben helped to pass the Water Quality Investment Act, which is a renewed commitment to address our nation's substantial needs for water and wastewater infrastructure. The ability of cities, rural water systems and tribal communities to ensure water quality for our nation's families is critical to the health of our country and will help create jobs.

All living systems need water. People need it. The climate needs it. Plants and wildlife need it. We are all part of the same living system, and we all need water. Ben learned the importance of water tending to the acequia that runs in his childhood front yard. Ben knows the importance of water to rural economies across America. Without a reliable water supply, we cannot improve human health, preserve natural ecosystems and culture, or grow rural economies. It is a critical pre-requisite for life, and we must ensure the protection of our water.